

TREATMENT PROPOSAL/AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT

Date: August 11, 2008
Temporary Identification number: 08-95
Owner/Custodian: Stephanie Malmros
Address: Center for American History
University of Texas at Austin

Telephone: 512-475-4257
Owner/Custodian call no.: Stephen F. Austin Papers
Title/Subject/Description (.01): Stephen F. Austin Decree 1826
Creator: Stephen F. Austin
Date of production: 1826
Place of production: Texas
Approximate dimensions (hxw): 13½" x 8½"
21.4 x 34.2cm

Conservator: Beth Antoine

Authorization

The undersigned requests and authorizes the Kilgarlin Center at the University of Texas, Austin, TX, to undertake conservation treatment of the artifact described in the attached Condition Report according to the procedures outlined in the appended Treatment Proposal. In the event the Owner/Custodian authorizes the Kilgarlin Center to proceed with the treatment recommended in the proposal such authorization shall be deemed to include acceptance by the depositor of the terms and conditions appearing in the original Authorization for Examination and Treatment. The undersigned further agrees that the Kilgarlin Center and the conservator may share any information or images obtained during the agreed upon examination, treatment, or investigation in written and public presentations.

Signature of Owner/Custodian: _____

Date: _____

Signature of conservator: _____

Date: _____

Primary support

The paper is darkened to a brown color, indicative of the advanced stages of iron gall ink corrosion. It also exhibits reverse foxing, or a light, blotchy discoloration throughout. It is likely embrittled as it has torn at most folds, but the silking prevents the examination of this condition. There are several major tears, and the silking is currently holding the many fragments together. There are many small losses at the edges of the document. There is one fragment at the bottom center that appears to be misplaced and may belong at the top left edge of the recto.

Seal

The color of the seal remains vibrant and its attachment to the paper is strong. There is a layer of skinned paper covering the remnants of the wafer from the original attachment.

Testing

Under magnification, a drop of de-ionized water on a sable brush was touched to the silking and the surface of the paper. The silking easily detached from the paper with pressure from a tungsten needle, indicating that it is adhered with a water-soluble adhesive.

The seal was also tested for solubility with a drop of de-ionized water on a sable brush under magnification. The seal softened after one drop, indicating that it is quite soluble and is likely starch-based.

Treatment Proposal

1. Remove silk from front and back of manuscript.
2. Wash to remove residual adhesive, as possible.
3. Alkalize as possible.
4. Mend tears and fill losses as needed.
5. House in acid-free folder.

Photography

Digital images taken before and after treatment, overall, recto and verso in ambient, raking, and transmitted light, as well as a photo-micrograph of the signature.

Possible Effects of Treatment

It is likely that there will be a slight shift in the color of the ink as a result of the alkalization. It is possible that the density of the ink will be slightly reduced.

Treatment Notes

See attached.

Treatment Performed

1. The manuscript was humidified overall in a Goretex humidity chamber for 45 minutes, then sprayed out with de-ionized water in a Dahlia sprayer. (10 min.)
2. The silk was lifted mechanically from the front and back with a micro-spatula and light force while still in the humidity chamber. (15 min.)
3. The manuscript was washed in a calcified de-ionized water bath for 5 minutes and the adhesive residue was reduced with a stiff brush. (10 min.)

4. After removal from the bath, the document was misted with alkalized de-ionized water (pH 9) and left to soak for 10 minutes. (5 min.)
5. It was flattened between Hollytex, blotters, and boards with heavy weight for two weeks. (5 min.)
6. The laminated fragments were detached with a micro-spatula after humidification with an Amylase enzyme poultice (Albertina-Kompresse) under light weight. (1 hour)
7. The manuscript was then re-humidified in a Goretex chamber four one hour and flattened between Hollytex, blotters, and boards with heavy weight until dry. (10 min.)
8. Tears were mended and losses filled using toned lens tissue (Green's lens tissue and Liquitex acrylic paints) and de-ionized water diluted 2.5:1 precipitated wheat starch paste (Colophon) and weighted locally until dry. (13 hrs.)
9. The manuscript was humidified in a tray chamber four three hours and flattened between Hollytex, blotters, and boards with heavy weight and left one week. (10 min.)
10. The manuscript was re-housed in an acid-free folder. (5 min.)

Total treatment time: 15 hours, 5 minutes